

GAMEDAYGUIDE

www.kstatecollegian.com | Friday, December 2, 2011 | K-State vs. Iowa State | Senior Day

BY THE NUMBERS

Key numbers to think of during Saturday's game

10

- with a win Saturday, the Wildcats will get 10 wins for the first time since 2003

In 2003, the Wildcats won the Big 12 Conference championship and went on to face Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl. With a win on Saturday, the Wildcats would keep themselves in the running for a Bowl Champion Series berth. A couple of things would still have to happen for the Wildcats to get to a BCS bowl, but 10 wins in a season is a great accomplishment for any college football team.

16

-the number of points K-State has beaten Iowa State the last three games

K-State has won the past three games, but they have all been single digits. In 2009, the Wildcats' Emmanuel Lamur blocked an extra point to give the Wildcats a 24-23 victory. Last season, the Wildcats were able to again hold the Cyclones from tying the game as they prevailed 27-20. When these two teams play, the games seem to be close. They are both very well coached teams that get the most out of their teams.

36

- the number of total touchdowns on the season for Collin Klein

Klein so far on the season has passed for 11 touchdowns, while rushing for 25. His 25 rushing touchdowns are second in the country, trailing only Montee Ball, who has 29. Klein is only two rushing touchdowns away from tying the all-time record for quarterback, held by Ricky Dobbs. The Cyclones, even though they are coming off that upset over Oklahoma State, still gave up a lot of yards. If the Wildcats are able to not turn the ball over, the Wildcats should be able to score some points and get the victory.

83

- the number of tackles by Arthur Brown

When Brown came from Miami, there were big expectations for the linebacker, and he has more than lived up to them as he leads the team in tackles. Ty Zimmerman is second with 70. The statistics are only a small piece of what Arthur Brown has brought to the team. He has shown the ability to run to the ball on defense as he is extremely fast. He sometimes over-pursues the play, but he causes offense to adjust, creating opportunities for other teams.

121

-the number of yards by the Wildcats against the Longhorns

Despite escaping Austin with a 17-13 victory, the Wildcats' offense was not good against the Longhorns. Klein who rushed for 127 yards against Texas last year, was held to four rushing yards on 26 carries. The offensive line was unable to get any push against the Longhorn defense and Klein was constantly tackled behind the line. The Cyclones do not have the defense the Longhorns have. Iowa State plays more of an opportunistic defense as they relied on turnovers in their victory over Oklahoma State.

-Compiled by Mark Kern

Wildcats prepare to take on 'very sound' Cyclone offense

Corbin McGuire
staff writer

The K-State football team is coming off a bye week after beating the Texas Longhorns 17-13 the week before. The Wildcats relied on their defense throughout the game as their offense struggled to move the ball, gaining only 121 yards of offense for the game.

The win against the Longhorns gave the Wildcats their ninth on the season while simultaneously improving the team's likelihood of receiving a bid to a Bowl Championship Series bowl.

The win also put the Wildcats at 6-2 in the Big 12 Conference and gives them a chance, if Oklahoma State defeats Oklahoma on Saturday, to win a share of the Big 12 title with a win against the Iowa State Cyclones at Bill Snyder Family Stadium on Saturday.

Head coach Bill Snyder, at his weekly press conference, said his team is aware of their post-season possibilities.

"They understand the implications of this ballgame," Snyder said. "I think they deem those things important to them collectively. I believe they are working towards the most favorable end that is available to them."

The Wildcats had a four-day break following the Texas game and Snyder said the break was "a needed rest, there is no doubt about that, but what the impact will be remains to be seen."

Snyder said that quarterback Collin Klein will practice this week and admitted that Klein not participating in the past two weeks of practice did have an impact on his performance but "not as much as people would like to think."

Snyder, after the game, said the Wildcats defense, not Klein and the offense, took a step forward against the Longhorns.

Linebacker Emmanuel Lamur and safety Ty Zimmerman each had an interception



Tommy Theis | Collegian

Junior defensive back **Nigel Malone** prepares to react moments before taking down **DeSean Hales** of the Texas Longhorns.

against the Longhorns that led to an Anthony Cantele field goal and a Klein rushing touchdown, respectively.

The Longhorns, down by four points in the fourth quarter, had two chances in the last three minutes to take the lead. K-State's defense, however, did not allow the lead to slip away, as they forced the Longhorns to turn the ball over on downs twice in the final minutes to secure the victory.

Snyder, displeased with his offense's performance, said his defense was "good enough to win," against Texas and he said the final defensive stand was the story of the entire game.

"It wasn't just the final stand, our defense had to

stand up all day," Snyder said. "Because our offense didn't."

The Wildcats will look to

"Our defense had to stand up all day, because our offense didn't."

Bill Snyder
head football coach

continue to improve on defense against a Cyclones offense that Snyder said usually plays "very sound football."

"They had some turnovers in that [Oklahoma] ballgame,

but normally they are a pretty secure football team," Snyder said. "They do not put themselves in jeopardy on offense."

The Cyclones (6-5, 3-5) are bowl eligible for the second time in three years, but they are coming off a 20-point loss at the hands of the Sooners after upsetting the then No. 2 Oklahoma State Cowboys the previous week.

Freshman Jared Barnett took over the Cyclones' quarterbacking duties from junior Steele Jantz after the Cyclones lost three consecutive games by a total of 81 points.

The Cyclones are now 3-1 with Barnett as a starter. He has shown the ability to be a dual-threat quarterback by

throwing for 1,025 yards and five touchdowns while rushing for 409 yards and one score.

The Cyclones will also look to get the ball to running back James White, who leads the team with 660 rushing yards and eight scores.

Saturday will be the last opportunity the Wildcat seniors have to play in Snyder Family Stadium and senior defensive end Jordan Voelker said he hopes to leave the fans with a good impression.

"It has definitely been an awesome ride," Voelker said. "Hopefully we are not finished yet."

Kickoff is set at 11:30 a.m. and the game will be televised on Fox Sports Network.

With energy restored, K-State aims for 10-win season

Sean Frye
staff writer

The Wildcats' offense will look to rebound from its most dismal performance of the season since its opening game against Eastern Kentucky on Saturday as the Wildcats play host to the Iowa State Cyclones on Senior Day.

Against the then-No. 23 Texas Longhorns two weeks ago, despite winning the game 17-13, the Wildcats looked terrible when they had possession of the ball. K-State only earned 121 yards of total offense throughout the night, went 4 for 16 on third downs and only maintained possession of the ball for 28 minutes.

Despite throwing for a touchdown and running for one as well, Collin Klein was held to just four yards rushing on 26 carries, only completed 9 of his 17 pass attempts and only threw for 83 yards.

After the game, Snyder told reporters that Klein had not practiced for two weeks due to the fact that he had taken such a beating in games throughout the year that Snyder felt it best to rest his quarterback during the week.

Klein has since returned to the practice field after the Wildcats had four days off for the Thanksgiving break, giving Klein plenty of time to heal.

"I think it had a little bit of an impact, not as much as people would like to think, but I think it certainly does," Bill Snyder said about the effect Klein's absence from practice had on the team. "Anyone would be hard pressed to go a substantial amount of time without practicing, particularly at that position. He handles it much better than you could anticipate."

Even though the Wildcats played poorly against the Longhorns on offense, it is a brand new week and the team is doing their best to not only recover from a bad performance, but to put on a good showing for the seniors, who will play at Bill Snyder Family Stadium for the last time on Saturday.

"We just go back to work," Snyder said. "They understand. That is the thing you ap-



Photos by Tommy Theis | Collegian

Sophomore running back **John Hubert** breaks past the Texas Longhorns' defense during the away game on Nov. 19. Hubert ended the game with 32 of the Wildcats' 38 rushing yards.

preciate about them. There are no excuses. You understand what the issues were and how they were created, and they have gone to work to try and rectify that. That is the way it is supposed to be. It tells you that they have that mental toughness and the perseverance to overcome adversity when it takes place and they are attempting to do it."

Coming off the bye week break, the Wildcats stayed focused throughout the week and took advantage of the rest they got to get refocused for their final two games.

"The team has actually responded quite well," freshman starting center BJ Finney said. "A lot of the guys are rested and have more energy about them, so hopefully it turns into a good week."

The emotions of Senior Day



Collin Klein speaks the cadence just before the snap. Klein had only .2 average yards rushing against the Longhorns, while his season average is 3.8.

will almost certainly take a toll on the players during the pre-game ceremonies, but come game time, the Wildcats will look to earn their 10th win of

the year.

"They are all one tight group," Finney said about the seniors on the team. "They are all after a good season this

year, and they all have kept us together by reminding us that no matter what the challenge is, we have to stick together and we will get through it. They are just a great bunch of guys."

With all the bowl scenarios and the possibility of winning a share of the Big 12 title being mentioned throughout the week, there has been plenty of distraction readily available for the team. However, the offense along with the whole team is doing their best to keep their minds concentrated on the Cyclones and earning a 10-2 record.

"We want a 10-win season, so that is what our goal is to get that 10th win," Finney said. "As far as the share of the title, we cannot really focus on that. We just have to go out and play our ballgame."

The night before Game Day: A poem

Ross Jensby
contributing writer

Editor's Note: This article was submitted to the Collegian from an outside writer.

'Twas the night before Game Day,
when all through the land
Not a creature was stirring, except
for the band.
Their Uniforms were ready and horns
polished with care,
In the hopes that a Wildcat Victory
soon would be there.

The band had toiled and struggled
but not a tear was shed,
Although many drops of sweat fell
from their heads.
Dr. Tracz pushed us hard but he said
"Hey band's a snap!",
As he started each rehearsal with
one single clap.

When out by McCain there arose
such a clatter,
I ran to the door to see what was the
matter
Beyond the dumpsters away from
the trash,
I saw the glimpse of a most mysteri-
ous flash

The moon shined bright whilst it a
gave me a show
And shed the light of mid-day to the
scene set below.
When right before my eyes an amaz-
ing thing did appear,
A purple Lamborghini became
crystal clear

It had a little old driver, who had the
Power of Will,
I knew in a moment this must be
old Bill!
More rapid than Daniel Thomas his
football calls came
And he whistled and shouted and
called them by name

Run! Pass! Jump! And the points
we'll be gettin'
For we have a legacy that can't be
unwritten!
To the stadium band! We'll fight
through the brawl
For we need you in order to play
Wildcat Football

Now as quick as an airplane that
through the air flies
Bill Syder and the band took to the
skies
So to the stadium we went to make

our debut
The Band, Dr. Tracz and Bill Snyder
too!

We all landed safely with the sound
of an ooph
and then Bill disappeared with a big
purple poof!
As I gasped in dismay and was look-
ing around
He reappeared with the football
team in one leap and bound.

He was dressed all in purple from his
head to his foot.
And he yelled at the band to watch
and stay put.
He screamed at the Defense and
with a whip crack
They all promised Bill there'd be no
QB sack!

His eyes how they twinkled! His
dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses his mouth
like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was strung up
like a bow
For what reason he smiled I sure
didn't know!

His ferocity didn't show in his smil-
ing white teeth
Only the fans know the wildcat that
lies beneath.
He had no broad face and no little
round belly.
Only six-pack abs that did not jiggle
like jelly.

He was calm and serious and no
jolly elf
I cried when I saw him in spite of
myself
A wink of his eye and a twist of his
head
Soon let me know I had nothing to
dread.

He spoke not a word but went
straight to work.
The game was amazing, wildcats
going berserk.
The players lined up in mighty big
rows
The other team stopped out of fear
and just froze

At the end of the game, to his team
he gave a whistle
They all shot up straight which
made the other team bristle
Then I heard him exclaim as he
touched a hand to his hat
WILDCAT VICTORY TODAY! EVERY
MAN A WILDCAT!

Heisman watch

Jared Brown
staff writer

Entering the final weekend
of the 2011 college football
regular season, only a hand-
ful of candidates remain as
standouts to win the ultimate
individual award, the Heis-
man trophy. Several players
have entered and dropped
out of the race for this pres-
tigious honor throughout the
season but only these select
few have put up Heisman-
worthy numbers consistently
every week. These four can-
didates have all but separated
themselves from the rest of
the competition going into
week 14. The Heisman race
is largely considered to be
a two-horse race between
Stanford's Andrew Luck and

Alabama's Trent Richardson.
However, both Luck and
Richardson have byes this
week as neither Stanford nor
Alabama made their confer-
ence's championship game.
Both Baylor's Robert Griffin
III and Wisconsin's Montee
Ball play this weekend and
have opportunities to im-
prove their status, which
could elevate them into the
same conversation with Luck
and Richardson..

1. Andrew Luck Quarterback, Stanford

It's no surprise entering
the season's final week in the
regular season that Stanford
quarterback Andrew Luck
sits atop the Heisman watch.
Luck, in the preseason, was

the easy choice to win the
Heisman award this season
and he hasn't disappointed.
Likely to be the number one
choice overall in next year's
NFL draft, Luck threw for
35 touchdowns while only
throwing nine interceptions
in his junior season for the
Cardinal. He accounted for
3170 yards through the air
and completed on 70 percent
of his passes this season. Last
week Luck threw for four
touchdowns and 233 yards
against a then 22nd ranked
Notre Dame team. If Luck
won, he would be the second
Stanford quarterback to win
the award. Jim Plunkett won
the Heisman trophy in 1970.

2. Trent Richardson Running back, Alabama

Considered to be Luck's
only real threat to the Heis-
man trophy, Trent Richard-
son has lead a Crimson Tide
rushing attack that ranks first
in the Southeastern Confer-
ence. Richardson has piled up
1583 yards on the ground this
season and 20 rushing touch-
downs. In addition to those
numbers, Richardson also
has 327 receiving yards and
three receiving touchdowns.
His performance on the field
this season has drawn com-
parisons to former Alabama
running back and 2009 Heis-
man trophy winner Mark
Ingram. In his Heisman
season, Ingram had 1658
yards on the ground and
rushed for 17 touchdowns.
Ingram also had 334 yards
receiving and 3 touchdowns.
Last week Richardson rushed
for 203 yards against Auburn
and had one receiving touch-
down.

3. Robert Griffin III Quarterback, Baylor

Griffin is arguably the
most explosive player in
college football. RGIII has
thrown for 3678 yards and
34 touchdowns with only
five interceptions. He has

also been one of the most ac-
curate passers in the nation,
completing on 72.6 percent
of his passes. What hurts him
is that traditionally the Heis-
man trophy is awarded to
the top player on a top team.
Griffin's Baylor Bears are cur-
rently 8-3 overall and are 5-3
in conference play. Last year's
Heisman award winner, Au-
burn's Cam Newton, put up
huge numbers and led an un-
defeated Tiger team that won
the national championship.
That being said, Griffin has
an opportunity to lift himself
into more serious discussion
for the award this weekend
as he faces a highly touted
Texas defense that has been
much improved in recent
weeks. Last week he only
played the first half of a 66-42
win against Texas Tech as he
was sidelined with what was
thought to be a concussion,
but still managed to throw
for 106 yards and one touch-
down. He also rushed for 62
yards and two touchdowns.

4. Montee Ball Running back, Wisconsin

Lastly, Montee Ball leads a
Wisconsin Badger that ranks
eighth in the nation in rush-
ing. Ball has rushed for 1622
yards this season and 29
touchdowns. He also has 248
receiving yards and 5 touch-
downs. With Richardson not
playing, Ball has an opportu-
nity this Saturday in the in-
augural Big Ten Conference
championship against Michi-
gan State to improve his Heis-
man status and put himself
into considerations for the
nation's top running back.
Ball has a unique opportu-
nity in that if he scores a
total of more rushing touch-
downs in Wisconsin's final
two games, the Big Ten
championship and the Bad-
ger's bowl game, he will break
former Oklahoma State run-
ning back and 1988 Heisman
trophy winner Barry Sanders'
record for most touchdowns,
39, in a single season.

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MATCHING UP

Tyler Dreiling
staff writer

K-STATE RUSH OFFENSE VS. IOWA STATE RUSH DEFENSE

Not a lot of defenses can completely shut down the Wildcat rushing attack. Texas was one of them, but Iowa State is not. The Cyclones are not terrible against ground attacks; they rank seventh in the Big 12 Conference, but asking them to stop an offense with a weapon like Collin Klein is a tall order. Bill Snyder was frustrated with his team's offense against the Longhorns. Expect to see that anger taken out on Iowa State if at all possible, but beware, the Cyclones possess an overachieving linebacking corps looking for respect.

ADVANTAGE: K-STATE



IOWA STATE RUSH OFFENSE VS. K-STATE RUSH DEFENSE

The Cyclones possess a number of different weapons on the ground, but none of them are superstar quality. The carries will be distributed between running backs James White and Jeff Woody, and quarterback Jared Barnett. The touches White gets will be determined by his health, as he nurses a nagging shoulder injury. He only had one carry against Oklahoma last week. Meanwhile, the K-State defense continues to show its strength, especially on the outside. Expect the Wildcats to force Iowa State to throw the ball.

ADVANTAGE: K-STATE



K-STATE PASS OFFENSE VS. IOWA STATE PASS DEFENSE

As the second-ranked team against the pass in the conference, Iowa State has proved doubters wrong this season. In their last two games, the Cyclones had six interceptions, and those were against two of the best quarterbacks in the country. This secondary is one to take seriously, and it is possible that K-State will only be able to have success passing the ball if the running game is successful first.

ADVANTAGE: IOWA STATE



IOWA STATE PASS OFFENSE VS. K-STATE PASS DEFENSE

Iowa State is led by freshman quarterback Jared Barnett, who has over-achieved since entering the starting position in late October with five touchdowns and five interceptions. He is no Brandon Weeden or Robert Griffin III, but the K-State secondary has struggled at times this season against less-than-spectacular quarterbacks. The Wildcats will likely see Saturday as an opportunity to make a name for themselves in this phase of the game, and if successful, it is hard to picture K-State losing.

ADVANTAGE: K-STATE



K-STATE SPECIAL TEAMS VS. IOWA STATE SPECIAL TEAMS

The kicking game has been largely inconsistent for the Cyclones. Two placekickers have seen the field this season and have missed four extra points and six of 15 field goal attempts. In addition, the field position battle has regularly favored K-State this season, and will likely do so again Saturday. Good special teams are a signature of Bill Snyder-coached squads. Expect more of the same.

ADVANTAGE: K-STATE



INTANGIBLES

It is Senior Day at Bill Snyder Family Stadium, and the Wildcats are striving for their first 10-win season since 2003. It is worth noting, however, that all of the bowl-related talk this week can be a distraction. A focused K-State team can win this one, but a few mistakes against a team like Iowa State can prove costly in a hurry. At the end of the day, why doubt Snyder?

ADVANTAGE: K-STATE



FINAL SCORE PREDICTION: 31-21 K-STATE

Breaking down the Cyclones



Sean Frye

In what will be the Wildcats' final test of the regular season, the Iowa State Cyclones, who are coming off a 26-6 loss to No. 10 Oklahoma, roll into town on Saturday for Senior Day.

While the Cyclones are only 6-5 overall and 3-5 in the Big 12 Conference, on Nov. 18 they proved they are one of the most dangerous teams in the conference by beating then undefeated No. 2 Oklahoma State. That overtime victory opened the floodgates to not only Bowl Championship Series chaos, but has given K-State a shot at a share of the Big 12 title should Oklahoma beat Oklahoma State this weekend.

The Cyclones started off the season hot, winning their first three games against Northern Iowa, Iowa and Connecticut. Then, when Big 12 play started, the Cyclones hit a snag, losing four straight contests to Texas, Baylor, Missouri and Texas A&M. Two straight wins over Texas Tech and Kansas seemingly sparked

the Cyclones; they shocked the country by upsetting the Cowboys 13 days after beating the Jayhawks. Last week, the Cyclones took their fifth loss of the year at the hands of an angry Oklahoma Sooners team, who had just been upset by Baylor.

"They play extremely hard," said K-State head coach Bill Snyder. "They play very sound football. They had some turnovers in that [Oklahoma] ballgame, but normally they are a pretty secure football team. They do not give up defensively an awful lot. They do not put themselves in jeopardy on offense. They are very sound, secure in the kicking game. I think fundamentally, they are a good football team."

Offensively, true freshman quarterback Jared Barnett has sparked the Cyclones. Barnett took over at quarterback on Oct. 29 and beat the Texas Tech Red Raiders in his first start. As a starter, he is 3-1 with his only loss coming to the Sooners. He has thrown for 1,025 passing yards and has tossed five touchdowns on the year, and has also added 409 yards and a touchdown on the ground.

"They ran the ball with [their previous quarterback] as well," Snyder said. "They did it with both of them so it is a vital, significant part of their offense."

On the ground, Cyclones

running back James White is their primary threat. He tweaked his shoulder last week against the Sooners, but he is expected to be back in action against the Wildcats. He has run for 660 yards and eight touchdowns on the year on just 142 carries.

Defensively, the Cyclones' best playmaker is defensive back Leonard Johnson. A projected NFL draft pick, Johnson's best game was against Oklahoma State, when he gave wide receiver Justin Blackmon problems all game. While he only has one interception, quarterbacks simply do not throw the ball his way too often.

Linebacker Jake Knott is the team's leading tackler with 104 on the season, including 3.5 tackles for a loss of yards. The Cyclones do not get a tremendous amount of pressure on opposing quarterbacks, as they have only accumulated 13 sacks on the season.

"They're very good," Snyder said. "They're equally adept at defending against the run and defending against the pass. Johnson is an extremely fine player. He is a good one-on-one cover game and has a good capacity for defending balls thrown his way."

Sean is a sophomore in journalism and mass communications. Please send comments to sports@spub.ksu.edu



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Games to watch: Conferences host championships this weekend



PAC 12 CHAMPIONSHIP OREGON VS. UCLA –

Pacific-12 Conference Championship (Oregon vs. UCLA) – The Pac-12's first football conference championship will be between the No. 9 Oregon Ducks (10-2, 8-1) and the UCLA Bruins (6-6, 5-4), with the winner receiving a bid to the Rose Bowl.

The Ducks thought they lost their chances of achieving their goal of going to a Bowl Champion Series national championship game for the second straight year in the first week of the season against the LSU Tigers. The Tigers beat the Ducks in a convincing fashion, 40-27.

The Ducks, however, positioned themselves for a chance at achieving this goal by winning nine straight games by an average margin of more than 29 points. The BCS championship chances slipped away from the Ducks after a heartbreaking loss to the USC Trojans. A missed field goal in the fourth quarter ended the Ducks attempted comeback against the Trojans and gave the Ducks their only conference loss of the season.

The Bruins will represent the Pac-12's South division despite the fact that division rival Trojans (10-2, 7-2) own a better conference record. Due to the NCAA sanctions currently on the Trojans, they are not allowed to qualify for any type of post-season play.

The Bruins are looking to rebound from a troubling week that included head coach Rick Neuheisel being fired following a 50-0 loss to the Trojans. Neuheisel will be allowed to coach the conference championship but offensive coordinator Mike Johnson will be the interim coach if the Bruins receive a bowl berth.

The championship game will be played on Friday at 7 p.m. in Eugene, Ore., at the Duck's Autzen Stadium where they have won 22 of their last 23 games. Fox will televise the game.

(10-2, 7-1) in the SEC championship game Saturday and ensure themselves a BCS championship bid.

The Tigers suspended quarterback Jordan Jefferson and Josh Johns for the first four games of the season due to an involvement in a bar fight. The Tigers also were without defensive standout Tyrann Mathieu, starting running back Spencer Ware and defensive back Tharold Simon against the Auburn Tigers, as they violated the team's drug policy.

All of the off-the-field issues that surrounded the Tigers did not hinder their play on the field. The Tigers defeated three teams ranked in the top 25 during Jefferson and Johns' suspensions by an average margin of more than 17 points. LSU handled Auburn, the reigning national champions, 45-10 despite the suspensions of three key players.

The Tigers narrowly escaped its toughest test of the season on the road against the Alabama Crimson Tide. Both defenses shined but multiple missed field goals by the Crimson Tide allowed the Tigers to escape with a 9-6 victory.

The Bulldogs, coming out of the SEC Western division, are winners of their last 10 games. The Bulldog's two losses came from their first two games of the season against the Boise State Broncos and the South Carolina Gamecocks respectively.

The Bulldogs, unlike the Tigers, are not playing for a BCS championship but have the opportunity to stain the Tiger's historic season and an opportunity to grab an automatic berth to a BCS bowl.

Georgia is hoping freshman running back Isaiah Crowell, fifth leading rusher in the SEC, will be ready to play Saturday after missing last week's game with an ankle injury.

The game will be played in Atlanta, Ga., in the Georgia Dome and kickoff is set for 3 p.m. CBS will televise the game.

The Hokies' experience in ACC championships is frequent in recent years, as they have qualified for the conference championship four times in five years.

Hokie quarterback Logan Thomas has been a big part of his team's success since its loss to the Tigers. Since that game, Thomas has thrown for 14 touchdowns and ran for nine touchdowns.

The Tigers, who started the season 8-0, dropped three of their next four games that included a 21-point loss to the South Carolina Gamecocks last week.

Clemson's sophomore quarterback Tajh Boyd suffered a hip injury against the Boston College Eagles that did not keep him out of any games. Boyd's progression as a quarterback started to decline after the injury and was most noticeable against the Gamecocks when he threw for only 83 yards.

The Tigers will look to play the level of football that got them a convincing victory against the Hokies early in the season while the Hokies will look to maintain its current playing level and get revenge against the Tigers.

The game is set to kickoff at 7 p.m. at Charlotte, N.C., in the Bank of America Stadium and ESPN will televise the game.

The rematch between the two schools will be for a bid to the Rose Bowl. The Badgers are trying to redeem last year's trip to the Rose Bowl, when the TCU Horned Frogs beat them. The Spartans, however, are playing for its first trip to the Rose Bowl since 1988.

The game is being held in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Kickoff is set for 7:17 p.m., and Fox will televise the game.



OKLAHOMA STATE VS. OKLAHOMA –

Despite the fact the Big 12 Conference will not have a conference championship this year due to conference realignment, the bedlam matchup between the No. 3 Oklahoma State Cowboys and the No.10 Oklahoma Sooners does have conference championship implications.

A Cowboys win would secure them their first outright Big 12 championship and keep them in the running for a BCS championship bid.

A Sooners victory ensures them a bid to the BCS bowl, at least a two-way share of the Big 12 title and a three-way tie if K-State defeats the Iowa State Cyclones.

The Sooners' loss to the Texas Tech Red Raiders threw them off their desired path to a national championship. The Sooners immediately got back on track with victories over K-State and Texas A&M before losing to Baylor in the final seconds.

The Cowboys' high-powered offense got them a No. 2 ranking, a 10-0 record and it put them in control to receive a bid to the BCS national championship. The control slipped away from the Cowboys after the Iowa State Cyclones upset them in two overtimes, 37-31. The loss followed a sorrowful week at Oklahoma State after a plane crash took the lives of two Oklahoma State women's basketball coaches.

The Sooners have won the last nine bedlam matchups by an average of more than 18 points.

The game will be played in Stillwater, Okla., in Boone Pickens Stadium. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. and ABC will televise the game.



SEC CHAMPIONSHIP GEORGIA VS. LSU –

The No. 1 LSU Tigers (12-0, 8-0) can continue its, thus far, perfect season against the No. 14 Georgia Bulldogs



ACC CHAMPIONSHIP VIRGINIA TECH VS. CLEMSON –

The No. 5 Virginia Tech Hokies (11-1, 7-1) get a rematch against the No. 20 Clemson Tigers (9-3, 6-2) Saturday in the ACC championship game.

The Tigers handed the Hokies their only loss of the season with a score of 23-3. Virginia Tech head coach Frank Beamer got his team to respond by winning its next seven games with its most recent win being a 38-0 blowout against the Virginia Cavaliers.



BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP WISCONSIN VS. MICHIGAN STATE –

The Big Ten's first football conference championship on Saturday between the No. 15 Wisconsin Badgers (10-2, 6-2) and the No. 13 Michigan State Spartans (10-2, 7-1) will be a rematch between the two schools.

The Badgers were on the rise in rankings in the polls and senior quarterback Russell Wilson was being mentioned in the Heisman race before their first matchup with the Spartans.

The Spartans upset the Badgers 37-31 when Spartan quarterback Kirk Cousins completed a pass to Keith Nichol in the end zone as time expired.

Michigan State was unable to carry the momentum from the win over the Badgers into its following game against the Nebraska Cornhuskers and lost 24-3 but responded to the loss by winning its next four games to secure its grasp on the Legends division of the Big Ten.

The only other blemish on the Badger's record is a 33-29 loss to the Ohio State Buckeyes the week after losing to the Spartans. The Badger's ended the season with four straight wins that ended with a 38-point win over the Penn State Nittany Lions to clinch the Leaders division.

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